

September 2020

Dear Admissions Officer,

Each year I write a letter to admissions officers at leading institutions of higher education outlining why members of BBYO, a Jewish teen organization for which I am proud to serve as the Chief Executive Officer, will serve as important leaders in your community. This year, as the pandemic and social unrest upends our lives, the resiliency and adaptive leadership displayed by BBYO members makes me more confident than ever in their ability to make a profound positive impact on the world.

With tens of thousands of teens in 54 countries and a rich history spanning close to a century, BBYO has a long-standing and far-reaching impact on the lives of young leaders. I refer to them as “leaders” because that is the focus of our movement—to produce a new generation of leaders who are driven by values and compassion as they focus their impact on strengthening society. Our members’ response to these unprecedented times have put those leadership skills to the test, and this has been the result:

- As in-person programming began to shut down in March, BBYO teens launched **BBYO On Demand**, a virtual space filled with thousands of classes, tournaments, and special events, many of them teen-designed and led. Entrepreneur Mark Cuban and incoming New York Times CEO Meredith Kopit Levien were among the prominent alumni who joined teens for conversations on the platform this spring. While terms like “social distancing” were first entering the lexicon, our members demonstrated initiative to forge new connections spanning the globe.
- When conversations around **racial justice** were reignited, BBYO members affirmed their solidarity and pledged to build and sustain a practice of anti-racism. I am proud to say they continuously fulfill that commitment—among other things, they have hosted civil rights and racial justice speakers, developed a comprehensive Racial Justice Action Guide, and launched a committee to provide peer-led training and expand BBYO’s engagement with members of color.
- With the approaching election, our members reaffirmed their commitment to civic responsibility and launched a robust **Voice Your Vote** campaign. Thousands of teens are volunteering through BBYO as field organizers and poll workers and inspiring their peers to join them in taking an active role in democracy.

The enthusiasm and passion our teens have brought to these and other efforts has been nothing short of astounding. Their collective ability to channel disruption into progress and discomfort into learning is a testament to their character and approach to personal growth. I have no doubt they will become valued members of your community and represent the kind of alumni you will proudly associate with your institution.

Should you have any questions about BBYO or about a specific applicant, please do not hesitate to contact me at 202-857-6580 or mgrossman@bbyo.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matthew Grossman".

Matthew Grossman
Chief Executive Officer